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MANCHIN VOTES TO PASS SPENDING PACKAGE

The Minibus includes funding to prevent Chinese Fentanyl from entering the U.S., treat substance use disorder, return an Amtrak ticket agent to West Virginia and expand broadband service in West Virginia

Washington, D.C. — U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) secured funding for top West Virginia priorities in the Minibus that was just passed by the Senate. The spending package includes funding for the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, Financial Services and General Government, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Senator Manchin authored provisions to investigate and prevent the smuggling of illicit fentanyl from China, fund FDA's continued efforts to fight the opioid epidemic, save West Virginia's Amtrak ticket agent, and urge the FCC to set aside funding for providing broadband service to the most difficult to serve areas in rural America.

"This bill includes huge wins for West Virginia, and I am thrilled to see it pass the Senate. I made sure that this legislation included funding and policies that protected communities from illicit Chinese fentanyl and opioid addiction, as well as better connect rural residents to needed goods and services by ensuring that our roads and highways are funded, securing an Amtrak ticket agent in the state, and expanding broadband access. Now my top priority will be making sure these West Virginia wins stay in the final spending bill that is now going to conference with the House of Representatives," Senator Manchin said.

Below is a list of top West Virginia priorities Senator Manchin secured in the spending package that passed:

Illicit Trade of Fentanyl: The Senate adopted an amendment introduced by Senator Manchin,

which passed unanimously in a 99-0 vote, which would appropriate \$1 million for the investigation and prevention of illicit fentanyl from China from entering the U.S.

Opioids: Prioritizes aid to rural areas with the highest rates of addiction like West Virginia, includes \$280 million for High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas and \$99 million for Drug Free Communities programs, and keeps these programs within the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) where they are most effective. The bill also includes \$59 million for the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to remove unsafe opioids from the market, increase educational activities, and continue existing efforts.

Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge: Encourages U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to consider and prioritize Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Amtrak: Requires Amtrak to maintain at least one station agent in every state, ensuring West Virginia will continue to have a ticket agent. It also requires Amtrak to justify decisions that jeopardize the future of the annual New River Train and harm small non-profits like the Collis P. Huntington Railroad Historical Society.

Rural Transportation: Fully funds Essential Air Service, which ensures continuous service to small communities. It also encourages the Federal Highway Administration to prioritize roads of critical commercial importance in the Appalachian Development Highway System, which includes Corridor H, and ensures that rural areas are given appropriate consideration for grants and other assistance by the Dept. of Transportation.

Housing: Includes \$3.3 billion for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), \$1.362 billion for Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, \$147 million for NeighborWorks, \$100 million for Choice Neighborhoods, and \$45 million for Housing Counseling.

Rural Broadband: Contains \$425 million for the Dept. of Agriculture's rural broadband loan and grant pilot program, \$53 million in Distance Learning and Telemedicine grants, and \$20 million dedicated to telecommunications assistance for rural communities combating the opioid epidemic. Senator Manchin's amendment directs the FCC to consider establishing a dedicated set aside within the Mobility Fund auction to provide assistance to the most expensive and difficult areas to serve. The bill also urges the FCC to move forward with the Remote Areas Fund, coordinate efforts with the Rural Utilities Service, and prevent discriminatory delivery and ensure call completion to rural America.

Clean Drinking Water: Provides more than \$3.6 billion in funding for clean drinking water and water infrastructure, including \$2.86 billion for Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, \$63 million for the Water Infrastructure Finance Innovation Act (WIFIA), and \$15 million for on-site technical assistance for rural communities with water infrastructure challenges.

Small Business: Includes \$241.6 million for the Small Business Administration and Entrepreneurial Development and \$130 million for Small Business Development Centers, which help foster entrepreneurs in West Virginia and other states.

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